



THE CIRCUIT RIDER

PORTLAND FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1838 SW JEFFERSON, PORTLAND, OR 97201

April 14, 2010
Volume 14, Issue 08

WORSHIP AT FIRST CHURCH

SUNDAY WORSHIP

APRIL 18

At 10:30 AM
we will celebrate
Confirmation
Sunday



As a Reconciling
Congregation,
members of
First United
Methodist Church
have pledged to
welcome and support
all who want to worship
with us, regardless of
race, gender, class or
sexual orientation.

LIVING A VIBRANT FAITH

BELIEVING THINKING ACTING



Celebrating Our Covenant Relationship

A PRESENTATION

Join us on Wednesday, May 5, 2010 for a special presentation on Brazil. We will begin with supper at 5:30PM in Collins Hall. This is your opportunity to talk with First Church Covenant Missionaries Gordon and Teca Greathouse as they share the latest developments related to the Methodist Church in Brazil and discuss the Shade and Fresh Water projects that have been developed throughout that country. The event will be hosted by the Global Missions Committee. They will provide a hearty black bean soup. Please bring a salad, side dish, or dessert to add to the dinner mix.

BRAZIL MISSION TRIP

A First Church Volunteers in Mission Team will be leaving on June 5, 2010 to work with the Brazilian Methodist Church located in Manaus, in the heart of the Amazon region. This team of 19 will be doing light construction work to assist in the building of some new facilities for a church located in this city of over 2 million. In addition, the team will be working with children from the region, as well as learning more about the work of our sister church in this city, which is located along the Amazon River. Please keep this work team in your thoughts and prayers in June. Listed to the right are those going on the 2010 Volunteers In Mission Trip:

Sarah Baker
Sue Beardwood
Shirley Blalock
Bob Bothman
(Vermont Hills UMC)
Jacquie Bothman
(Vermont Hills UMC)
Betty Cobb
Caroline Crumpacker
Lowell Greathouse
Susan Greathouse
Elaine Jones
Shirley Knight
(retired UMC clergy member)
Dee Poujade
Gwyneth Rochlin
Jim Ruyle
Joanne Ruyle
Frey Sterns
Leif Terdal
Marge Terdal
Norman White



memo

Rev. Dr. Arvin R. Luchs

Her comment set my mind reeling. I don't often have the opportunity to hear the BBC's *World Have Your Say* – a talk-show featuring international opinions. The caller was from Africa, “Of course,” she said matter-of-factly, “the purpose of politics is to divide people!”

How did the practice of politics become “divide and conquer?” When did “seeking common good,” “consensus,” and “collaboration” drop out of the public discourse. Why has “compromise” been redefined as “capitulation?” When did we start labeling those who seek to work together to find a mutually agreeable alternative as “weak?” Are there no longer “win-win” solutions to our needs?

I can still hear my college political science professor's mantra, “Politics is not bad—it is the art of the *polis*—the way people organize to live together in community. Sometimes it is done well—other times not so!” In a brief stint as an intern in the Oregon Legislature I heard people like (then) Governor Mark Hatfield, the late Tom McCall and Wayne Morse describe it as “the art of finding compromise” emerging from vigorous debate, thoughtful reflection and a common commitment to discover the best possible solution—and a tenacious, but loyal minority ultimately cooperating with the majority's decision.

Maybe I'm naive—or my memory idealistic—but that doesn't seem to be the way things are these days. The recent raucous diatribes over our nation's health care system never seemed to be a matter of clarifying issues, seeking facts, listening to one another and designing a plan that does the best for the most people. What I witnessed was a partisan battle filled with deception and deceit, inflamed passions and back room deals. It's a conflict that has not concluded with the votes but sparked angry, denigrating words, personal threats and promises of ongoing reprisals once the opposition has time (in an ill-chosen phrase) to “reload.”

Interactions in the church, like all other human institutions, can be described as ‘political.’ History suggests they are all-to-often not ‘good’ ones. Some seem little different than what goes on in the market-place or a legislative assembly. Sadly, all too often United Methodist's debates are just as rancorous as society's. Discussions in local congregations—including occasionally our own—can easily degenerate from collaborative decision-making into ‘my way or the highway’ confrontations.

We should not be satisfied with that.

After all, we confess to follow a Christ who called us to operate differently than society. He urged us to be ‘in’ but not ‘of’ the world. (cf John 15 and Jesus' prayer in John 17) Repeatedly the Apostle Paul intervened when divisive squabbles threaten to divide congregations. He called both sides to a higher vision, bigger values, and common goals that transcended their differences. He reminded the Corinthians that they were part of Christ's body—and no part is more important than another—or can dominate if the body is healthy. (cf 1 Cor 12)

The challenge for the Church is to model styles of relationships and interactions (“politics” --if you will) which honor diversity of opinion, create a climate of ‘win-win’ and place faithfulness to God's call above all else. More and more of our discussions are focused on discerning God's Spirit guiding us to consensus. That's the process we've engaged to plan our future. Hopefully a climate that encourages active listening and spiritual reflection can infuse more and more of our one-on-one relationships as well.

Perhaps we can show the world that “politics,” done well, can unite — not divide!

See you in Church!

Arvin

ADULT sunday school classes

umw

UNITED
METHODIST
WOMEN

CHANGING CHRISTIANITY

This class meets each Sunday from 9:00 to 10:15 AM in Room 110. This class is beginning a study of: *Good Without God: What a Billion Nonreligious People Believe* by Greg Epstein

FELLOWSHIP OF SEEKERS

This class meets each Sunday from 9:15 to 10:15 AM in Room 134. This class is open to all who seek spiritual growth through study and discussion of writings by current and historic religious thinkers. Following a time of fellowship, lively discussions are led by different class members each week. This class is currently studying: *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life* by Marjorie Thompson.

HOW TO THINK LIKE LEONARDO DA VINCI

Sundays, May 2-30, 2010
9:15 to 10:15 AM in the Fireside Room

Be a part of this five-part series in which we will utilize Micheal J. Gelb's book, *How to Think Like Leonardo da Vinci: Seven Steps to Genius Every Day*. Gelb is a noted Da Vinci scholar and has analyzed the thinking styles and modalities of Leonardo's multifaceted life which demonstrate "genius in abundance." Gelb's conclusion is that, "...the essential elements of Leonardo's d Vinci's approach to learning and the cultivation of intelligence are quite clear and can be studied, emulated and applied." Gelb breaks Da Vinci's thinking into seven distinct principles/themes: Curiosita, Dimostrazione, Sensazione, Sfumato, Arte/Scienza, Corporalita, and Connessione.

Doug Force will be teaching this class, which will offer a brief introduction to these concepts, utilize exercises that illustrate each type of thinking, and discuss the application of these modalities in our everyday lives. Books are available for \$12.00 in the church office.

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER: THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Sundays, June 6-27, 2010 - 9:15 AM in the Fireside Room

"We have been silent witnesses of evil deeds ... Will our inward power of resistance be strong enough for us to find our way back?"
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

In this class, we will explore the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45), who not only was a remarkable German theologian, but was also a central figure in the German Resistance to the Nazis during the time of Adolf Hitler. He was also a founding member of the Confessing Church. He ultimately paid the price for his stand by being executed in 1945 in a German concentration camp. In this class we will see the DVD Bonhoeffer and study his writing about "the cost of discipleship." Gene Gregory will be our teacher.



All women are invited to attend the following activities. We strive to develop a supportive fellowship as we participate in mission with women, children, and youth at home and abroad. President, Melba Rizzo, 503/635-6716

THE UMW BOOK GROUP

The UMW Book Group will meet on Wednesday, April 21, at 10:00 AM in the Church Library. Sue Fisher, chair, will report on *Stubborn Twig*, by Lauren Kessler, a factual account of three generations of a Japanese American family as they struggled to succeed in the Pacific Northwest.

THE CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

The Circle of Friends will meet Wednesday, April 21 at 11:30 AM in Room 134. We will hold our annual baby shower for families served by FISH Emergency Services. Bring a baby item (e.g., clothing, baby wipes, or diapers) and a sandwich for lunch. Chair: Alyson Inouye

THE RUTH CIRCLE

The Ruth Circle will meet on Wednesday, April 21, at noon in Room 204. *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey*, by Jill Bolte Taylor, will be reviewed by Marion Hollenberg. Bring a sandwich for lunch. Chair: Betty-Lou Hare

THE PLANNING TEAM

The next meeting of the Planning Team will be Wednesday, May 26, at 9:30 AM, in Room 110. The April meeting has been canceled.

REV. LOWELL GREATHOUSE

On so many fronts, we continue to hear about and deal with the political polarization of our society. Recently, I signed a statement on civility that was put out by a national religious organization in response to the yelling, spitting, and threats of physical violence that followed the health care reform legislation.

In the recent edition of Sojourners' "Sojomail," Jim Wallis wrote yet again about this concern saying: "Just a few months ago, a deeply concerned, veteran member of Congress called me to express real despair about the alarming level of disrespect, personal attacks, and even hateful rhetoric that was occurring among her colleagues—reflecting a degeneration of public debate in our national culture." Wallis goes on to say that another member of Congress expressed real fear about threats of violence toward him and his family. Like others, Wallis is calling for religious leaders to sign a "Covenant of Civility" in our communities.

This all got me to thinking about Jacob Needleman's book *The Wisdom of Love: Toward a Shared Inner Life* in which he says: "We need to be respected as men and women, as mothers and fathers, and for what we have learned and practiced in our life activities, in our jobs or careers; we need to be respected as human beings without complicated philosophical or theological justification. We are human beings; we must respect each other: whether we are aware of it or not, the voice of conscience is always telling us that." (*The Wisdom of Love*, p. 46) How do each of us contribute to the community culture we are a part of?



bread for the world



an offering of letters

A TIME TO CHANGE HISTORY FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE

Join members and friends of First UMC on April 18 or 25, 2010 in the Commons in Collins Hall to write a short letter to Congress urging reenactment of childhood nutrition programs and tax credits for low-income people. As stewards of God's abundant creation, we are called to address the underlying causes of hunger and poverty in our country.

President Obama and others have set the goal of ending childhood hunger in the U.S. by 2015. As people of faith, we can help turn this goal into a reality. Strengthening child nutrition programs will help achieve this goal. Although food assistance to hungry people is vital, it is not enough. Struggling parents need enough financial resources to meet their basic needs—including nutritional food for their children.

That's why this year Bread for the World's Offering of Letters will ask Congress to protect and strengthen a few key tax credits that can make a big difference for low-income people. Several tax policies will be debated as tax cuts enacted earlier this decade and tax credits passed in the 2009 Recovery Act are all due to expire at the end of 2010. The needs of low-income families and hungry children cannot be lost in the debate about which policies to renew or change.

please take note

items of interest

WANT TO PLAY PING PONG?

The first session of the First UMC Ping-Pong Fellowship will be Sunday, April 18 from 12:30 to 3:30 PM. We will meet in the gym after the fellowship in Collins Hall. Bring a sack lunch. Teens, adults and families are welcome. For more information contact Kay Ward at 971/255-1430. Thank you to Rev. Greathouse and Susan and to Cal and Pat Brockman for the donation of ping-pong tables.

FOOD AND FRIENDS

Join in the fun with Food and Friends April gathering at Bridgeport Brewery in the Pearl for dinner on Saturday April 24, 2010. We will meet at 6:00 PM. Child care will be available in the Nursery from 5:45 to 9:15 PM. Please RSVP to Megan Humphreys-Loving at 503/228-3195 ext.227 and indicate if you will need child care.

DINING OUT FOR LIFE

On Thursday, April 29, 2010, dine out at participating restaurants and 20% to 30% of your bill will be donated to EMO's HIV Day Center and the Partnership Project to support people living with HIV/AIDS in the Portland area. Find a participating restaurant near you at www.diningoutforlife.com/portland Dine out and fight AIDS.

EARTH DAY 2010



EARTH DAY IN MUSIC AND SONG

On Thursday, April 23, from 7:30 to 9:00 PM there will be an Earth Day celebration: Earth Day in Music and Song at the First Unitarian Church, SW 12th and Salmon, Portland. The featured artist will be Michael Allen Harrison along with additional instrumental and vocal offerings including choirs led by David York. Refreshments and conversation will follow in the Channing Room of First Unitarian. Sponsors include: Center for Earth Leadership, First Unitarian Church, and New Thought Center for Spiritual Living. For more information, call Jeanne at 503/244-0026

EARTH DAY AT FIRST CHURCH

Earth Day, a day to celebrate the joys of Gods Creation is just around the corner. Join us for worship on Sunday April 25, 2010. There will be a special children's sermon which will conclude with a field trip around the grounds for the children's Sunday School classes. We will plant a special gift into our already lovely landscape with the help of some of the Shovel & Rake Gang. Be sure to check out the Commons in Collins Hall that Sunday. Planet Church, along with Church & Society and other earth lovers, will be serving coffee and goodies. We will also have a couple great exhibits from Oregon Interfaith Power & Light, some Green Tips, and our final sale of Chinook Books for a discounted \$15.00. We hope to see you then!

THE ENERGY TASK FORCE: A SUCCESS STORY

The Energy Task Force, a spin-off from Planet Church, sought to recommend measures that would help our congregation conserve the precious resource of water. First Church has about 40 inside water faucets and two shower heads, the majority of which weren't up to current conservation standards. The Portland Water Bureau Water Conservation Department was contacted and we were delighted to find they would provide appropriate aerators to us without charge. Recently, with great thanks to Dwight Drago and Vern Groves new aerators and shower heads were installed. There were a few places where the new aerators would not fit, but most of the faucets now have state of the art water conservation flow restrictors. The new shower heads use about half the water while providing basically the same results. The new hand washing faucet aerators use about a fourth of the water as the old ones (from 2.2 gallons per minute to .5 gallons per minute.) Obviously if everyone did this it would make a huge difference in water consumption! This is one way to practice what we preach about earth stewardship and it is hoped that planet conservatives will want to take similar measures at home on behalf of water conservation.

FORUM: PROFILES IN SERVICE

Our Profiles In Service Forums have become a meaningful way of connecting with members and friends of First Church. On Sunday, April 18, 2010, join us for this forum at noon in the Fireside Room. A light lunch and child care will be provided.

This forum features three people who ... *Serve Afar, Serve Nearby, Serve at Home*:

Mark Morford is an environmental attorney with Stoel Rives and the Scoutmaster for Troop 1, chartered by First Church. Mark is a volunteer rescuer for Portland Mountain Rescue and a board member for Africa Bridge. He and his family independently support a public primary school in Tanzania, where they currently are renovating 15 classrooms.

Dave Rullman is a Master Gardener. As a member of the Shovel & Rake Gang at First Church, you've seen the effects of his work every time you visit. Now come and learn what motivates him and some tips for how you can serve others by being in the garden.

Anne Kayser makes her home a place of service. She tutors several students, some of whom have developmental disabilities. She offers respite to a few families in crisis by taking their teenagers into her home, sometimes just for a night, and twice for a whole month. Anne and her family have also hosted ten foreign exchange students and teachers. Anne volunteers in the community, too, but finds particular reward from those home-based activities.

forum
@
first
church

Publication Deadlines

Articles for The Circuit Rider are due no later than 10:00 AM on the Thursday before publication the following Wednesday. The next Circuit Rider will be published on April 28, 2010.

Bulletin insert information

is due no later than 4:45 pm on **Wednesday**.

Sunday service participant

information for the Sunday bulletin is due no later than noon on **Wednesday**.

E-mail:

office@fumcpdx.org

The Circuit Rider Online or by E-Mail

See the latest and past issues of **The Circuit Rider** in color at www.fumcpdx.org/newsletter

The Circuit Rider can be e-mailed to you. E-mail the church office at office@fumcpdx.org to request it by e-mail.

our prayers

prayers and concerns

PRAYERS OF CONGRATULATIONS FOR ...

The Grattons! Eric & Sarah Gratton became proud parents of Kielle Rose Gratton on April 7, 2010 at 8:15 pm in Brisbane, Australia. She weighed 8lbs 4oz and is 20.5 inches. Stateside grandparents, Scott and Janice Gratton plan to visit soon!

PRAYERS OF CONCERN FOR ...

Holly Bartow, 11-months-old, had day surgery and is doing well. Holly is the daughter of Brett & Nancy Bartow.

WE CONTINUE OUR PRAYERS FOR ...

Michele Ingram, Michael McManus, Jay Stewart, and Sally Yates ...

PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY ABROAD ...

Jared Bomberger, Daniel Bomberger

our gratitude

FROM THE HILLS

To Our Dear Friends at First UMC, Thank you for the joy and fun you shared with Bill over the years and the support during the past few months. A very special thank you to those who assisted with the memorial service celebration for Bill.

Joan, Stuart, Stephen and family

